

SUBCHAPTER K—ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM PROCEDURES

PART 290—REGIONAL CENTERS FOR THE TRANSFER OF MANU- FACTURING TECHNOLOGY

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§ 290.1 Purpose.

This rule provides policy for a program to establish Regional Centers for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology as well as the prescribed policies and procedures to insure the fair, equitable and uniform treatment of proposals for assistance. In addition, the rule provides general guidelines for the management of the program by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, as well as criteria for the evaluation of the Centers, throughout the lifecycle of financial assistance to the Centers by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

§ 290.2 Definitions.

(a) The phrase *advanced manufacturing technology* refers to new technologies which have recently been developed, or are currently under development, for use in product or part design, fabrication, assembly, quality control, or improving production efficiency.

(b) The term *Center* or *Regional Center* means a NIST-established Regional Center for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology described under these procedures.

(c) The term *operating award* means a cooperative agreement which provides funding and technical assistance to a

Center for purposes set forth in § 290.3 of these procedures.

(d) The term *Director* means the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(e) The term *NIST* means the National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce.

(f) The term *Program* or *Centers Program* means the NIST program for establishment of, support for, and cooperative interaction with Regional Centers for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology.

(g) The term *qualified proposal* means a proposal submitted by a nonprofit organization which meets the basic requirements set forth in § 290.5 of these procedures.

(h) The term *Secretary* means the Secretary of Commerce.

(i) The term *target firm* means those firms best able to absorb advanced manufacturing technologies and techniques, especially those developed at NIST, and which are already well prepared in an operational, management and financial sense to improve the levels of technology they employ.

§ 290.3 Program description.

(a) The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall provide technical and financial assistance for the creation and support of Regional Centers for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology. Each Center shall be affiliated with a U.S.-based nonprofit institution or organization which has submitted a qualified proposal for a Center Operating Award under these procedures. Support may be provided for a period not to exceed six years. The Centers work with industry, universities, nonprofit economic development organizations and state governments to transfer advanced manufacturing technologies, processes, and methods as defined in § 290.2 to small and medium sized firms. These technology transfer efforts focus on the continuous and incremental improvement of the target firms. The advanced manufacturing technology which is the focus of the Centers is the